

A photograph of a soldier in camouflage uniform standing in a doorway. In the foreground, a German Shepherd dog is walking towards the right. The room has blue and white walls, a tiled floor, and some furniture like a table and chairs.

Guardian

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Photo of the Month

Photo by Sgt. Matthew Chlosta



Italian Army Soldiers celebrate the Italian soccer team's victory over France in the 2006 World Cup Championship game and their country's 4th World Cup overall at the "Casa Italia" in Film City on July 9.

Guardian

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on the Covers

FRONT COVER PHOTO BY SGT. MATTHEW CHLOSTA - Sgt. Clinton Darrisaw III, military working dog handler, 230th Military Police Company, K-9, Hanau, Germany, Task Force Falcon, and "Rex," Darrisaw's Belgian Malinois Military Working Dog conduct an explosives detection sweep at 8:15 a.m. before a TF Hellas's MEDCAP on July 18 in a school on the outskirts of the village Zllatar/Zlatare. See pages 16-17 for the full story.

BACK COVER PHOTO BY SPC. GENE DuBIELEK - Sgt. Chad Saathoff, crew chief, Company A, Task Force Talon, Blanchard, Mich. examines the tail rotor of a UH-60A Blackhawk helicopter during a post flight inspection on the Camp Bondsteel flight line at 5:10 p.m. on July 6. See page 27 to read the story.

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Photos by Sgt. Matthew Chlosta

LNOs are the MNTF(E) "middlemen"

8:10 a.m. April 21 Veles, the FYROM

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1:05 p.m. April 20 Film City, Pristina



Photo by Sgt. Matthew Chlosta

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Photo by Sgt. Matthew Chlosta



CC's

column



**Photo, Layout and Design by
Sgt. Matthew Chlosta**

Brig. Gen. Darren Owens, commanding general, Multi-National Task Force (East) speaks to Soldiers from MNTF(E) during a ceremony on July 4, celebrating America's Independence Day at 11 a.m. on Camp Bondsteel.

There was once a poster displayed on the wall of an armory back home in Texas. The display was an advertisement for the Reserve Component Tank Commander's Course. The placard posed an interesting question, "If someone accused you of being a good tank commander, would there be enough evidence to convict you?"

We can ask a similar question of ourselves here today. What evidence do we have to prove that we are accomplishing this mission? We all know the mission is to provide a safe and secure environment here in Kosovo and support the transition to civil authority.

What evidence do we have to prove that we are accomplishing this goal? Is there good reason to believe that we are doing well?

Consider these current statistics about our operations:

- Our task force has conducted 43 brigade-level operations, including a large number of cross-boundary missions.
- We have conducted more than 20 medical assistance missions and helped treat more than 4,600 people. Our veterinary assistance missions have helped treat more than 1,400 animals.
- Our helicopters have logged more than 4,000 hours of flight time on observation, transport, and medical evacuation missions.
- Our ground units have conducted thousands of patrols and other missions, requiring more than six million gallons of diesel fuel to accomplish, while still maintaining a vehicle readiness rate of 98 percent.
- Our Soldiers have adopted over 40 Kosovar schools where we've donated school supplies, improved playgrounds and facilities, and provided important educational programs to thousands of children.

In addition to our operations here, look at some of the ways we are setting ourselves up for success when we return home:

- More than 200 Soldiers have re-enlisted or extended their enlistments.
- Our supply system has issued new ACU uniforms to more than 1,600 Soldiers through the Rapid Fielding Initiative.
- More than 100 Soldiers will be trained as infantrymen during this deployment, a valuable qualification in the years ahead.

The evidence is clear. We were given a mission to accomplish and through your hard work, professionalism, and dedication, it is getting done.

LONE STAR!

CSM'S CORNER

What It Means To Be A Soldier



Photo by Sgt. Matthew Chlosta

**Command Sgt. Maj. Kenneth Boyer,
command sergeant major, MNTF(E)**

To be a "Soldier" means different things to different people. Individuals join the Army with varying degrees of expectations and perceptions. As a young boy during the Vietnam War period, I would play "Army." I envisioned myself as a stealthy killer, lurking in the jungle, preying on my hapless enemy. A few years later, I was in the jungle, but reality turned out quite different from my expectations. Instead of gliding through the forest like a tiger on the prowl, I was quite often staggering through the underbrush like a drunken sailor, overburdened with seemingly hundreds of pounds of weapons, ammo and equipment. My misery index-meter stayed pegged out most of the time. Living on C-rations and functioning on 2-4 hours sleep per night did not make a positive impact on my physical well-being or my disposition. All of my youthful naïve illusions were destroyed, replaced by the harsh reality of life as an infantryman.

As time went by however, I became hardened by the conditions with which I was forced to contend. I came to look with disdain on anyone who wasn't Infantry, the ones who enjoyed the amenities of "the rear," the ones who were clueless about what it was like to be a warrior. I developed a deep sense of pride in what I did and I strove to be the best I could be.

It has been many years since my days as an Infantryman, but the lessons that I learned back then are still valid today. I learned that being a Soldier is being a member of a team and that means putting the needs of the team ahead of my own. It means accepting responsibility for my actions. It means to persevere and carry on when things aren't perfect, instead of looking for someone to blame, which seems to be the preferred method in much of our society today. It means to have pride in what you do, and do your best, regardless what your job may be. For me particularly, it means realizing that my expectations may not always exactly be met, but I can either be part of the problem - or part of the solution. I choose the latter. I hope you will too.

Soldier On!

CSM Boyer

Q&A

Spc. Pawel Liszcz from MNTF(E)'s Polish/Ukranian Battalion gets grilled by Q&A. He talks about: bench pressing more than twice his weight; his life back in Poland and how he spends his time in Kosovo:

Q: What is your job/mission with MNTF(E) here on CBS?

A: I am a driver (for the) POL/UKR LNO team.

Q: Where are you from?

A: I am from the 1st. Podhales Riflemen Battalion in Rzeszow, Poland.

Q: What do you do back in Poland? Are you a fulltime Soldier?

A: I am a fulltime Soldier in the Polish Army. I will serve in the Polish Army after I (return to) Poland. I served 2 years in Poland and now 1 year in Kosovo.

Q: How long is your deployment here, how did you end up getting deployed here, do you get vacations?

A: I have served in Kosovo since September 2005. My

**Spc. Pawel Liszcz
TF POL/UKR BATTALION
28-years-old**



Interview, Photo, Layout & Design
by Sgt. Matthew Chlosta

August 2006

deployment will finish in September 2006. I have not been deployed anywhere else before Kosovo. During my deployment in Kosovo I had 14 days off. It was my vacation. I spent (this time) with my wife in Poland.

Q: Do you live on Camp Bondsteel?

A: I live on CBS with the POL/UKR LNO team.

Q: Is your family back in Poland, wife, kids?

A: I have a wife. She lives in Poland. What is interesting, (is that) my wife's parents have been living in (the) U.S. for 10 years. I (don't) have kids - yet.

Q: How do you feel about the deployment here and how is it contributing to Kosovo's safe and secure environment?

A: I think that deployment here is indispensable. We are here to protect all people in Kosovo. In my opinion it is very important to keep peace and help all people.

Q: Do you have friends from the other forces here? If so which ones?

A: Yes, I do. I have friends in Ukrainian and Lithuanian Army, but (my) best friend from the other armies is U.S. Soldier, Staff Sgt. Andrew Kosmala, (helicopter) mechanic, Task Force Talon. We met during the cordon & search in February or March. His parents are from Poland but now live in Philadelphia. He speaks Polish.

Q: What do you find most enjoyable and most interesting about this deployment?

A: I think the traveling. I have been in Kosovo in the urban areas, villages and mountains. I get to see what Kosovo and people live like inside.

Q: What do you find most challenging?

A: I think that the most challenging is during the mission in Kosovo to acquire experience to the next mission, probably in Afghanistan or Iraq. (Poland has an entire Army division deployed to Iraq).

Q: Why did you enter the bench press competition? Did you win? How? How many times? Do you enter competitions anywhere else in Kosovo, back home?

A: Because I like it. On CBS I won three times during my deployment. The last time was (on) June 28. During this competition I bench pressed 445 lbs. I have entered the bench press competition in Poland since 1998. I was 1999 Polish Army Champion in (the) bench press & 2nd place in the 1998 Polish Championship. I won several times in local championships in Poland. My best bench press in the gym (not in competition) is 500 lbs.

Q: When did you begin working out and why? How often do you work out? Why do you think you were able to win? How did it feel to win the contest?

A: I began working out at age 13, when I saw the European Championship on TV. I practice three or four times every week in (the) gym. I do it because I like it. I do it for my health.

Q: Is there anything else you'd like to add, message to friends back home?

A: I want to tell my wife Magda thanks for supporting me.

Guardian

Stage 6 - AB ATTACK

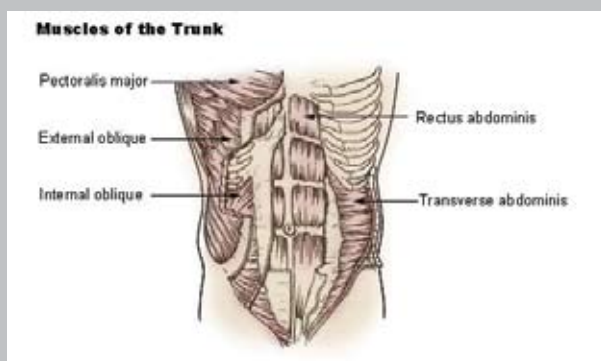
A 6-pack, an 8-pack, a case or a keg? What about a Michelin or two? Which of these do you have? OK, now which one do you want? Does everyone desire the rock-hard abs that you see on the covers of magazines? Probably. Does everyone know how to get there? Probably not. Desire will get you a long way in almost everything, but to get the abs you desire you'll have to do something about it.

Proper diet, cardiovascular training and a boat-load of crunches, combined, will get you what you want for your abs. I wrote about nutritional intake and how running will burn calories in previous articles. You can work your abs until you're blue in the face but if you don't burn the fat that's covering them, they will continue to hide from you.

The traditional 6-pack is made of one single muscle, not 6; the rectus abdominis. If you are seeing better results in the upper portion of your mid-section, it's because you haven't burned the excess fat that is often carried further south. It doesn't mean that you have to "work your lower abs." There are, however, other muscle groups that help you achieve the craving for the washboard effect.

Those two muscle groups are 1) the transverses abdominals and 2) internal and external obliques. Your transverses abdominals acts as a body wrap to keep your insides in. Your obliques, because they are on both sides of your torso, keep you stable and help you rotate without injury.

So, how do we work these muscles? I suggest a strict 3-5 day per week regimen. Your abdominals recover more rapidly than most other muscles in your body so you are able to work them more.



Exercise 1 – The Crunch—Keeping your hands behind your head, this exercise is more like a chin raise. If necessary, put a tennis ball under your chin and raise your head toward the sky while your knees are bent at a 90-degree angle and keep your feet firmly planted on the ground. As you get into weeks 2-4, slow your repetitions, hold the up position longer and even raise your pelvis at the same time. This will intensify the exercise. To work your obliques, add a set or two by turning your torso to the right and left.

Exercise 2 – The Reverse Crunch—Lie on your back, place your hands behind your head, raise your chin straight off the ground. Make sure your knees are bent at a 90-degree angle but off the ground and in the air. One repetition is when you bring your knees to your chest and your chin reaches for the sky. To intensify this exercise in weeks 2-4, extend your arms to the side and keep them 2-4 inches off the ground rather than behind your head.

Exercise 3 – The Full-Body Sit-up—Lie on your back completely horizontal, raise your entire torso while bending your knees. You should meet with your feet on the ground, knees bent at a 90-degree angle, and your arms fully extended on the outer part of your knees; then back to the starting position. To intensify this exercise in weeks 2-4, hold a medicine ball in your hands. To work your obliques, add a set or two by turning your torso to the right and left.

Exercise 4 – The Plank—Lie on your stomach with your arms underneath you, raise yourself up onto your elbows and look straight ahead. You should be on your toes and your abdominals should be squeezed tight. Hold it! To work your obliques, add a set or two by turning your torso to the right and left and hold yourself up on just one elbow.

Exercise 5 – The Oblique Extension—Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and a dumbbell in each hand. (Be careful, start this exercise with light weights). By crunch/contracting your obliques, lower the weight towards your knee and raise back to the starting position. Repeat with the other side. Increase the weight during weeks 2-4. It is very important to keep your back straight during this exercise and you do not hunch over. This exercise works your oblique muscles.

Do all 5 exercises above for maximum results. If you feel that you can do more reps or sets, by all means, go for it. There are tons of additional exercisess that you can do to work your abdominals, don't be afraid to change it up. Get creative and remember, with the proper diet and these exercises, you will be well on your way to washboard abs.

Next month I'll talk about "Gun Control," where you'll learn how to increase the size of your bicep and tricep muscles. To make suggestions for upcoming Fit2Fight columns e-mail me at michael.bennett@bondsteel2.areur.army.mil. Remember, keep up the hard work and stay **Fit 2 Fight!**



STATE OF THE STATUS

Phase One Talks Unresolved: "Status" Talks still Underway

When talking about the status of Kosovo, there is a simple question: Will Kosovo be independent of Serbia or remain a province of Serbia?

Let's take a quick recap of our last communication: six rounds of talks had occurred. The first dealing with decentralization, second – interconnection between Serbian majority municipalities with Belgrade, municipality interconnection, and the financing of municipalities, third – the creation of municipalities, fourth – decentralization or creation of new municipalities revisited, fifth – cultural heritage, and the sixth round dealing with economics.

The first phase of talks is not complete due to unresolved issues dealing with decentralization and cultural heritage. The seventh round of the first phase of talks were to continue on July 11th. However they were postponed due to some key players' inaccessibility for the talks. This round was then rescheduled to the 18th and 19th of July where both decentralization and cultural heritage were discussed.

Cultural heritage was discussed in the fifth round and characterized as the most successful round. However as of this date, no agreement has been made. Negotiators are attempting to agree on the number of protection zones for cultural heritage sites and the size of the protection zone for each of those sites. Some of the sites considered on the list are: Pec Patriarchy, Gracanica Monastery, Church of Bogorodica and the Decani Monastery. With the help of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Albanians have proposed 15 locations for protection zones and the Serbians have proposed 39 locations. Again, no agreement as been made, but negotiations will continue.

Another topic not yet resolved is the issue of decentralization, meaning local self-government of municipalities. An agreement has not been made on the number of Serbian municipalities to add or the expansion of current Serbian Municipalities. Various areas are being considered for decentralization, but no plan has been completed or approved by either group or the international community.

Column by 1st Lt. Rachel Ramos

Layout & Design by Sgt. Matthew Chlosta

The continuation of the first phase of talks will continue in conjunction to the second phase, which began July 24th, between UN Special Envoy Mr Martti Ahtisaari, the Serbian Negotiation Team and the Albanian Negotiation Team. This second phase had direct communication between them on the "status" of Kosovo.

Serbian president Boris Tadic and Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica met face to face for the first time with their counterparts from the Kosovar Provisional Institutions of Self Government (PISG), president Fatmir Sejdiu and Prime Minister Agim Ceku in Vienna. Each side presented their position on final status.

The Serbian side laid out a plan for essential autonomy. The autonomy would be guaranteed with a constitutional agreement. Kosovo's constitutional jurisdiction would be implemented by the province's institutions, legislative, executive and judicial government. Serbia would retain control of foreign affairs and borders.

The PISG plan for future status consists of full independence. That state would then cooperate with its neighbors, work on creating a national identity, and have its state symbols supporting Kosovo's civil identity.

Both plans call for inclusion of ethnic minorities in the final government structure.

While no compromises were met during the first round of the second phase, it was a historic first step. The next round of first phase talks will be held in early August.



Photo by Sgt. Brandon Krahmer
"State of the Status" columnist
1st Lt. Rachel Ramos, chief, open
source intelligence, Task Force Fal-
con will update readers on the most
recent developments on the future
status of Kosovo.

STAND ALONE PHOTOS

Photo by: Spc. Michael O'Neal



Sgt. Douglas Whitney, medic, TF Med Falcon, demonstrates how to properly secure a patient prior to loading them in ambulance at his station at the Kosovo Nurse Symposium, aimed to promote the essence of nursing, held at the North Town gym on July 22. Attendees included nurses from local municipalities who participated in a variety of stations in addition to the patient loading station shown above. Other stations included trauma stages, mental health, triage, and fingerprinting.

If you have photos of MNTF(E) Soldiers that you feel are worthy of publication contact Sgt. Matthew Chlosta, editor, or Spc. J. TaShun Joycé, assistant editor, at guardian@bondsteel2.areur.army.mil.

Photo by: Staff Sgt.



Sgt. Patricia Garcia, Personnel Services Center ment, G-1 officer in charge, TF Falcon July 25,

Photo by Spc. J. TaShun Joycé



Sgt. Gregory Bennett, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, TF Houston practices his swing prior to the closest to the pin tournament July 22 on Camp Bondsteel's Bergstrom Field. Bennett, with only two months golfing experience, took home first place honors in the beginner's bracket.

For more photos visit the photo gallery of the Guardian online @<http://www.tffalcon.hqusareur.mil>

Matthew Arrington, retention NCOIC, TF Falcon



and Casualty NCO, TF Falcon is read the oath of re-enlistment by Lt. Col. Darrell Deon the Camp Bondsteel parade field, viewed by the rest of the G-1 staff.

Photo by: Spc. Michael O'Neal



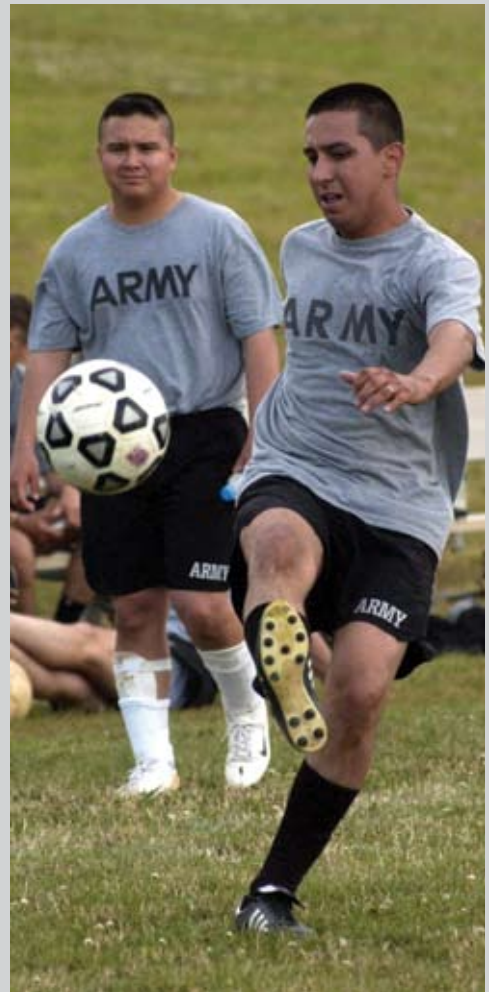
Alternative rock band Hollowell gives a live performance for the Soldiers of Camp Bondsteel at the South Town MWR outside stage on June 25.

We welcome submissions of JPEG photos with cutlines, photo credit and full identification for consideration. Photos could be published in the Guardian magazine or on the Guardian online - www.tffalcon.hqusareur.army.mil

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Photo by: Spc. Gene DuBielak



Sgt. Victor Covarrubias, tactical operations center NCO, D. Co., TF Houston shows off some fancy footwork while 1st Lt. Richard Nazareno, G-6, TF Houston observes from the sidelines.

Photo by Cpt. Sunset Belinsky



Maj. Scott Beechel, FYROM LNO, TF Falcon receives the Combat Infantryman's Badge for combat action in OEF from Lt.Col. Marc Carolan, OIC, JVB. Maj. Oliver Mintz, S3, TF Alamo, and Maj. Jose Rivera, TF Falcon, await their awards. Command Sgt. Maj. Jimmy Broyles, TF Houston assists the presentation.

11

Task Force Houston Sol through humanitarian e

While on a patrol in the town of Malisheve / Malisevo this past January, a man approached the members of 3rd Squad 2nd Platoon, Company B, Task Force Houston. As the residents of Kosovo often do, this man sought help from the Soldiers. The man told Staff Sgt. Matthew Malmquist, squad leader, that his son needed help. Believing the man's son was in immediate danger Malmquist ordered the squad to follow the man in order to assist his son.

The Kosovar Albanian led the squad to the school in Malisheve / Malisevo. There the Soldiers from 3rd squad first saw young Lentrit Aliu. The boy walked toward his father with obvious difficulty. Initially it was difficult to tell what was wrong with him. A closer look showed that he had one leg considerably longer than the other and that the shorter leg appeared inflexible.

In a private room at the school Sendi Aliu, the boy's father informed Malmquist of his son's condition.

"He has a genetic defect called proximal focal femoral deficiency," he told him through an interpreter. Aliu wanted to know if the Soldiers could take his son to Camp Bondsteel for the medical attention he needed.

Proximal femoral focal deficiency is a rare birth defect that affects the pelvis and proximal femur (thighbone). The result is that the hip is deformed and the leg itself is shortened. The condition may be only on one side or on both.

Malmquist told Aliu that Camp Bondsteel did not have the medical resources to help Lentrit. Malmquist then asked Aliu for his contact information so that they could look into what could be done to help his son.

That evening in January back at Camp Monteith the squad had a meeting to discuss Lentrit's condition and decide what if anything they could do for him. "When we saw the kid we decided we had to help," Cpl. Rickey Holbert, assistant squad leader, 3rd sqd. 2nd plt., Co. B, TF Houston, said. "We just didn't know where to start."

Malmquist turned to the Internet in search of answers. Slowly the pieces started to fall into place. The Internet search found a pro bono



Lentrit hugs his father, Sendi Aliu as he talks with members of 3rd Squad, 2nd platoon, Company B, Task Force Houston during a visit to their house to discuss arrangements to secure passports for father and son.

hospital in Shreveport La. that was both able and willing to perform the surgery. With the surgical aspect resolved the next problem to solve was how to transport Lentrit and his father to the United States.

The process from then on would be long and complicated, requiring both time and money. The Soldiers' time came when available from an already full schedule. The money came from an unexpected source.

The squad wanted to help, but they were not seeking

dier helps young boy ffort

Story and Photos by: Spc. Gene DuBielak
Layout & Design by: Spc. J. TaShun Joycé

attention or publicity. Few outside of the squad knew of the efforts to help young Lentrit. One night while talking to his mother in Minnesota Malmquist told her of the squad's efforts. Wanting to help, his mother told his grandmother.

Together, Malmquist's family solicited donations from churches to help defray the costs of airline tickets, passports, and money to cover expenses both while in the U.S. and to help the family in Kosovo while the father was gone. The press became aware of what the Soldiers were doing to help the young Kosovar.

When it was discovered that Malmquist was from

Bryan, Texas, the Bryan Eagle newspaper wrote a story and asked readers to contribute what they could to help facilitate Malmquist's efforts. The response from both Bryan, Texas and the Minnesota churches was overwhelming.

The money raised was enough to cover all costs and to establish a small account for the family in Kosovo to live on.

"At first I was little upset with unwanted publicity, but it turned out to be a good thing," Malmquist said. "It would not have been possible to do it without them. It was an incredible thing they did."

With the financial issues taken care of Malmquist focused on all the other tasks that had to be completed before Lentrit could go to the states and receive the medical attention he needed. Malmquist assisted with getting the father and son passports. Once the passports were acquired it was necessary to get visas to allow the pair to travel to the US.

To acquire the visas, they had to travel to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The provisional government of Kosovo could not issue them as Kosovo does not have status as a country, so there is no official U.S. embassy.

With most of the arrangements made there were still a few minor issues left to resolve. Malmquist made sure that Lentrit and his father would be met at the airport in the states by an Albanian interpreter and a wheelchair to aid his movement to the terminal.

One of the last and most important arrangements was made with the assistance of a hospital in Austria.

"When he has his surgery they will amputate his right leg at the knee and fit him with a prosthetic," Malmquist said. "He will probably outgrow the prosthetic three

times before he can be fitted with one that will be permanent."

The hospital in Austria agreed to fit Lentrit when needed and supply the prosthetic limbs free of charge.

With all the arrangements made it was time for young Lentrit to leave home for the first time. On July 9, with his extended family around him Lentrit tearfully loaded into the waiting SUV with his father, Malmquist and Spc. Derek Rantala to head to the airport in Pristina/Prishtine.

As the truck pulled slowly away from the only home he had known, his father tried to reassure him that

everything would be all right. During the drive to the airport, his spirits lifted and the ever present smile of a young boy returned.

At the airport the family said their goodbyes and everyone wished father and son luck. Lentrit hugged his family and shook hands with the Soldiers as he and his father

began the first phase of their journey.

"To tell the truth we didn't know if it was going to happen," Rantala said. "I am glad that he is getting to go and receive the care he needs."



Staff Sgt. Matthew Malmquist, Scout team 4, Company C, TF Houston sits with Lentrit Aliu at the Gjilan / Gnjilane regional municipal hospital during a visit to determine his medical condition. In order to obtain a visa it had to be proven that surgery needed could not be provided in Kosovo.

Balk

The schizophrenic Kosovo weather finally cleared away just in time for a highly anticipated annual birthday party celebration.

On a picture perfect cloudless day and with President of Kosovo Fatmir Sejdiu and Prime Minister of Kosovo Agim Ceku in attendance, U.S. Soldiers from the Texas National Guard's 36th Infantry Division and Multi-National Task Force (East) marked July 4 as America's 230th year of independence during a ceremony at 11 a.m. on Victory Field.

After the last note of the national anthem, Brig. Gen. Darren Owens, commanding general, MNTF(E), gave a short but powerful speech about America's struggle for independence.

"We as Americans can proudly say the Declaration of Independence, signed in seventeen seventy-six, gave birth to the ideals of freedom that others in the world only dream about," Owens said. "We are free to love, worship and live as we want – but freedom does have a price. Our service here in Kosovo is part of that price.

"We should pause and remember that those symbols of our power and freedom are reflected in your actions everyday as you brave men and women in uniform sacrifice being with your families and if need be, even your lives in preserving liberty," Owens said.

More than halfway through a yearlong NATO peace enforcement mission in the Balkans, Soldiers enjoyed the fast paced 30 minute ceremony.

"I enjoyed it," Sgt. Stephen Forde, Company A, Task Force Alamo, Austin, Texas, said.

"I really like his (Owens') speech," Forde said. "He's sincere. He's a good guy."

The ceremony's finale had the crowd "rubber necking" to see a flyover by three Blackhawk and two Apache helicopters from MNTF(E)'s Task Force Talon.

The "birds" flew in a symbolic wedge formation with the medical evacuation Blackhawk helicopter flanked on both sides by another Blackhawk and an Apache on the perimeter, Sgt. Levi Frost, helicopter mechanic, TF Talon, Waterloo, Iowa, said.

"I think it went well," Frost said. "I really liked the speech. I -- really liked the flyover. I felt the importance of the ceremony – the weight of it (the deployment) for the first time with the appearance of the President and Prime Minister of Kosovo (being here). It really makes me feel appreciated."

Owens finished his speech with an eye toward the future of Kosovo and the significance of the Soldiers' sacrifices.

"Today we not only honor the independence of the United States, we honor your service, your courage, and countless sacrifices in this distant land far from home," Owens said. "I do not view the work that KFOR does here as just preserving the peace for a safe Kosovo, I view it in a nobler, more exalted light; I view the great work we do here as part of laying the cornerstone of liberty for generations yet to come. Through your service and sacrifice, you help make every day Independence Day for the United States of America."

4th of July

*Story, Photo, Layout & Design by
Sgt. Matthew Chlosta*

Right, Sgt. Maj. Jerry Horsley, operations sergeant major, G3, Task Force Falcon, from Cedar Creek, Texas, bows his head at 11 a.m., July 4, on Camp Bondsteel's Victory Field during the Independence Day ceremony invocation.

ans



Military working dogs take a bit



Sgt. Mark Potter, military working dog handler, TF Falcon, Coventry, R.I., and his German Shepard Hena walk through the Shterpce/Strpce market on July 20, to conduct their weekly explosives detection sweep.

He padded softly and quietly through the building filled with early morning shadows. Each room was illuminated only by the morning light that cascaded through the windows. He listened to his sergeant's commands as he searched for the scent of explosives. Rex2A325 is the first line of defense on most operations in Kosovo. He is a Belgian Malinois Military Working Dog.

"You go where the dog takes you, especially in the dark," Sgt. Clinton Darrisaw III, military working dog handler, Task Force Falcon, Jonesboro, Ga., said, after he and Rex completed their sweep for explosives inside a school near the village of Zllatar/Zlatare on the morning of July 18, before a TF Hellas medical civil assistance program later that day.

Rex2A325 is able to identify explosives by smelling odors undetectable to humans.

If the dogs do detect explosives, "(We) evacuate the whole building and don't let anyone in until EOD (explosive ordinance disposal) gets here," Darrisaw III, said.

Experience counts

The Army's use of dog handlers and their dogs has been around since before WW II, but now they are busier than ever before as the American military fights the Global War on Terror on

multiple fronts and in dozens of countries.

During the Vietnam War military working dogs were given rank, and were held accountable for their own actions, Staff Sgt. Michael Derr, kennel master, TF Falcon, Waukomis, Okla., said. "But now we're responsible for everything."

The four dog handlers deployed to Camp Bondsteel are Regular Army Soldiers from the 230th Military Police Company in Germany with two from Hanau and two from Wiesbaden.

They deployed here for a year and rotated into Kosovo, with their individual dogs, this spring.

Darrisaw III was deployed to Baghdad and earned a Bronze Star while attached to the 1st Cavalry Division from 2004-2005, while Sgt. Mark Potter, military working dog handler, TF Falcon, Coventry, R.I., was in Mosul, Iraq for seven months in 2004.

Kosovo missions

Here the military working dogs are used for detection and patrol.

"The military working dogs' senses of sight, smell and hearing enhance his detection capabilities to provide commanders with a physical and psychological deterrent to criminal activity," Derr said.

They go on similar missions here compared to the ones in Iraq, but without bullets flying and mortars

See more Dogs.....Page 31

e out of bombs

Bow!



Above, a sign warns Soldiers about the dangers of entering military working dog handlers' training compound on Camp Bondsteel without an escort.

Below, Sgt. Clinton Darrisaw III, military working dog handler, Task Force Falcon, Jonesborro, Ga., shows off his dog's "bitewurst" treat on July 20.

Wow!



A Kosovo Police Service dog handler demonstrate their capabilities on July 20, during a multi-national training session outside the village of Shtime/Stimlje.

Story, Photos, Layout & Design by
Sgt. Matthew Chlosta

LNOs

know

"The Art of Good Business" The Usual Suspects: Multi-



Maj. Trey Roberson,
LNO, FYROM, TF Falcon,
MNTF(E),



Master Sgt. Ed Hansen,
LNO, FYROM, TF Falcon,
MNTF(E)



Sgt. David Hickman,
LNO, TF Alamo, MNTF(E)



Sgt. 1st Class Bryan Biggs,
LNO, TF Houston, MNTF(E)



Sgt. Ioannis Sotiriadis,
LNO, TF Hellas, MNTF(E)



Sgt. Stilianos Kolaxis, LNO,
TF Hellas, MNTF(E)

In one scene of the British movie "Layer Cake" one character gives another a lesson about life, he says, "The art of good business is being a good middleman."

The Liaison Officers for Multi-National Task Force (East) know all too well how this mantra applies to their job on a daily basis.

The MNTF(E) LNOs are THE "middlemen" between their Task Forces, MNTF(E) and whatever elements they have to coordinate with for various missions and situations that come up in and outside of Kosovo that involve MNTF(E).

Spread like fingers from a hand

Spread out like fingers from a hand, the MNTF(E) LNOs are in Heidelberg, Germany; the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; at the Command of Kosovo Forces, Film City, Prishtine/Pristina and inside the tactical operations center on Camp Bondsteel. The TOC LNOs represent the Italian Carabinieri's Multi-National Specialized Unit, the POL/UKR Battalion, TF Hellas, TF Houston and TF Alamo.

"Our main task is coordinate all issues between POL/UKR BAT and MNTF(E) but sometimes we have (to) coordinate tasks with troops from other MNTFs and Battalions from MNTF(E)," Polish Army Cpt. Tomasz Radziejowski, chief, LNO, POL/UKR Bat., Prezemysl, Poland, said.

The Heidelberg LNO coordinates taskings between United States Army Europe and MNTF(E).

"My job entails VTCs(video teleconferences), briefings, coordination with different USAREUR staff proponents for Balkans issues, coordination with Kosovo or Bosnia in reference to USAREUR questions, e-mails, phone calls, passing info from USAREUR to the Bal-

Story, Photos, Layout & Design by
Sgt. Matthew Chlosta

Business is Being a Good Middleman"

National Task Force (East)'s Liaison Officers Line Up



Cpt. Krzysztof Rupiczak, LNO,
POL/UKR Bat., MNTF(E)



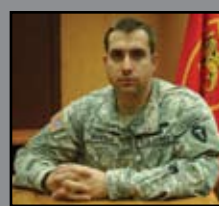
Cpt. Piotr Stawicki, LNO,
POL/UKR Bat., MNTF(E)



Cpt. Tomasz Radziejowski, chief,
LNO, POL/UKR Bat., MNTF(E)



Lt. Col. Timothy Red, LNO,
USAREUR, TF Falcon,
MNTF(E)



Maj. Jose Rivera, LNO,
COMKFOR, TF Falcon,
MNTF(E)



Italian Carabinieri
Chief Warrant Officer 2
Sergio Leporatti, LNO, MSU

kans and passing info from Balkans to USAREUR (and) meetings," Lt. Col. Timothy Red, liaison officer, United States Army Europe, Task Force Falcon, MNTF(E), Duncanville, Texas, wrote by e-mail on July 12.

The USAREUR LNO is significant and contributes to the MNTF(E) overall mission, because all logistical and administrative support for the Balkans comes from USAREUR, Red wrote.

Master Sgt. Ed Hansen and Maj. Trey Roberson, liaison officers, for the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Task Force Falcon, are the link between MNTF(E) and the FYROM's Army, local police and border police.

The FYROM LNOs spend most of their time on the road or in meetings traveling from Shkup/Skopje to the middle of FYROM to the mountainous border region, to Prishtine/Pristina to Camp Able Sentry to Veles and seemingly everywhere in-between.

"Our liaisons down here (in FYROM) serve as a critical interface between us (MNTF(E) (and) the country team -- to make sure what we do and what they're doing on the sides of the border (are in sync). We continue to have close interaction so there is not confusion or misunderstandings," Col. Mark Campsey, chief of staff, MNTF(E) said.

"Our job is mostly about management of information. It's about telling the story of Multi-National Task Force (East) its actions and accomplishments to the commander of KFOR and his command group," LNO to the Commander of Kosovo Forces, Maj. Jose Rivera, LNO, COMKFOR, TF Falcon, MNTF(E), said, about his experience as an LNO for the past six months.

Rivera communicates regularly with Campsey and the MNTF(E) TOC.

Why MNTF(E) has LNOs

"The role of the LNO is very significant," Rivera said. "One thing we try to do here at KFOR is to prove our units interoperability. Everyday we work with members of over 29 NATO and non NATO force - providing nations in a variety of missions and a variety of capacities.

"It supports the overall Task Force (East) mission because -- it keeps a line of communication open between the command group of KFOR and the command group of Multi-National Task Force (East)," Rivera said.

Red wrote that he finds, helping guide/expedite an important requirement for the Balkans through the USAREUR waters is the most satisfying thing about being an LNO.

"There is an LNO at USAREUR in Heidelberg, Germany, to enable the Balkans units to be successful in accomplishing their mission," Red wrote.

"The most challenging part of the job is trying to be



On left, Igor Petrovski, assistant duty police officer, the FYROM Border Police talks and drinks coffee with Master Sgt. Ed Hansen, noncommissioned officer-in-charge, liaison officer, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Task Force Falcon at the Tanusevci border checkpoint.

a part of two teams at the same time," Red wrote.

"When our job becomes the most critical is when there is some kind of crisis or the assembling of the Crisis Action Team, that involves all of the KFOR staff, the KFOR Command Group and the LNOs for the different task forces," Rivera said.

Rivera said they've had CATs for Former Kosovo President Rugova's death, recent flooding and for forest fires in different areas of operation.

"Our main function as the LNO's is the communication between this location (CBS) and (FYROM)," Hansen said. We put people together and watch them

Read more LNOs on ...Page 30

Alternative Church offers a



Sgt. Blanton Smith, aide de camp, Command Sergeant Major, MNTF(E) shares his testimony in front of a growing Friday Night Alive congregation on June 30, in a service that was dedicated primarily for providing religious testimony instead of the normal Friday evening message. On the same night, Friday Night Alive had its highest number of attendees since beginning on May 19.

Waking up early on Sunday morning isn't for everyone. Whether it's the pressures of an ongoing mission in a fast-paced deployed environment, the need to get as much sleep as possible, or the live coverage of the 'playoff game of the century' being broadcast in the wee hours of the morning due to the time difference between Europe and the United States, many of life's distractions keep some churchgoers from attending traditional Sunday morning worship services.

A lot of these busy people are still interested in attending a religious worship service, but not finding a service that they are used to or they feel comfortable with may also contribute in many people sitting elsewhere besides the pews.

"We wanted to do something

different from the traditional Sunday morning service," Spc. Robert Haeffner, supply technician, Headquarters and Headquarters Co., TF Falcon, El Paso, Texas said. "We want to attract the people who wouldn't normally come to Sunday services and we wanted to include more contemporary worship music."

In a discussion that Haeffner had with Sgt. Blanton Smith and another friend, the idea of a more relaxed service focused around contemporary

music came up nearly three months prior to the first Friday Night Alive service on May 19. The popular term for what he and his friends aimed to create is often referred to as "Alternative Church."

After talking with Lt. Col. (Ch.) Gordon Oglesby, deputy task force chaplain, MNTF (E) about what they were planning, the musically

laid back approach to praise and worship

inclined trio began practicing at the North Town Chapel.

"We practice on Tuesday and Thursday but there are a lot of times we just get together and play for hours," guitar player for the First Baptist Church in Leona, TX Sgt. Blanton Smith, from Bryan, Texas, CSM aide, TF Falcon said.

"I'm not really sure what we were practicing for but Chaplain Oglesby noticed and that led to us having a talk with the Unit Ministry Team about what we wanted to do in late April. That got the ball rolling," Haeffner said.

"This (Friday Night Alive) began as a Soldier initiated vision, yet it remains a Chaplain led service," Lt. Col. (Ch) Bruce Postma, task force chaplain, MNTF(E). "Three of our Chaplains are actively involved in the service to provide leadership and guidance to those in attendance."

"So far things have been going really well," Smith said. "Each Friday our attendance grows. When you look in the crowd you can tell that the word is getting around."

Besides one flyer sent out via e-mail to everyone on Camp Bondsteel, the news about Friday Night Alive services have spread completely by word- of-mouth, Haeffner said.

On June 30, Friday Night Alive had its largest turn-out of 35 attendees, he said. On the same night, the service was conducted in a way that was unconventional to its already unconventional manner. Instead of the usual testimony and lesson provided by one of the Unit Ministry Team chaplains, an entire service was dedicated to testimonies with a short message at the end, Haeffner said.

"We have continued to develop the service to meet the need of the audience," Postma said. "That's where the testimonies came from. Other Soldiers respond well to others' stories about having a closer relationship with God."

Dallas, Texas resident, Staff Sgt. Michael Bennett, NCOIC S-1, HHC, TF Falcon, a

regular at Friday Night Alive services, was one of four attendees who shared their testimony with the congregation.

"I've been attending Friday Night Alive since its first service," Bennett said. "The services are inspirational. They give me a taste of the kind of church I'm used to back home."

What may be a somewhat different taste than the churches back home is the candlelit ambiance of Friday Night Alive and the free coffee provided to all those in attendance.

"We're trying to make things comfortable for people who wouldn't normally come," Haeffner said.

In addition to Friday Night Alive there is another alternative church service held at the South Town Chapel Sunday evenings at seven p.m., Haeffner said. "I think it's a great service," Sgt. Fred Moreno from

Brooklyn, New York, G-3 operations, TF Falcon said. "It's a lot of fun, with a relaxed setting and good fellowship. They do a lot of praise and worship and the messages can be applied to our daily lives."

"I'm thankful to the chaplains and everyone who has participated," Bennett said. "This service has been helpful for myself and others and has given us the opportunity to get closer to God through Jesus on this deployment."

"I invite everyone to come by the North Town Chapel to check things out, Friday nights at seven p.m.," Haeffner said.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Other Chapel services include:

North Town Chapel

Monday: 1900 Puppet Ministry Team

Tuesday: 1900 North Chapel Bible Study

Wednesday: 1900 Song of Solomon

Sunday: 1100 Protestant Service, 1400 Gospel Service

1900 Roman Catholic Mass

South Town Chapel

Daily: 1130 Roman Catholic Mass

Saturday: 1700 Roman Catholic Mass, 1800 Praise Band Practice

Wednesday: 1830 Bible Study

Friday: Jewish Service Study

Sunday: 0930 Contemporary Protestant Service

1300 Latter Day Saints Fellowship

1900 Coffee House Protestant Service

CARE UNDER FIRE

New Army Combat Medic Training



Left, Spc. James Barnes, Combat Medic, HHC, Task Force Alamo provides cover, while Staff Sgt. Frank Johnson, head medic, HHC, Task Force Alamo and Spc. Juan Trevino, TF Alamo transport the injured Soldier to the Casualty Collection Point for MEDEVAC.

To a Soldier, the Combat Medic is as important on the battlefield as oxygen is to the earth's atmosphere. Both elements are essential for survival. The Army's relentless operational tempo has led to new training requirements for all combat medics, known as Combat Medic Advanced Skills Training, to ensure that medics achieve an overall understanding of the differences between garrison and combat trauma care.

Camp Bondsteel was the only overseas location to participate in this course taught via video teleconferencing from Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, Texas, which ended with a practical field exercise administered by qualified instructors.

During this week-long course, student medics were tested using a simulated combat scenario that involved taking care of wounded Soldiers who sustained injuries after coming in contact with

improvised explosive devices and small arms fire. Medics were also given a written test covering the entire course curriculum to validate their mastery of the training.

CMAST was founded on the basic concepts and principles of Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TC-3) with modifications that include: management of the airway, chest trauma, hemorrhage and shock of the battlefield casualty. The modifications were implemented to address the two leading causes of death on the battlefield, which are:

Exsanguinations (bleeding) from extremity wounds: Extremity wounds account for greater than 60 percent of all wounds on today's battlefield.

Tension Pneumothorax: Even with body armor, penetrating chest trauma leaves a route for air to escape the body quickly, which creates positive pressure upon the

designed to save lives

lungs causing asphyxiation.

"All of these changes are the product of battlefield experience from Soldiers coming back from Iraq and Afghanistan," Staff Sgt. Frank Johnson, head medic, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Task Force Alamo, said. "The evaluators were very knowledgeable and very proficient at what they were doing. They were able to give us good instruction without hindering the training. They shared a lot with us, which is very important in a training environment."

To help prepare the medics for the shock of seeing horrible combat injuries make-up was applied to the injured role players to make things more realistic. Some of the wounds replicated were amputation, abdominal wounds, sucking wounds, and burns to the face.

"It's critical that the appearance of the wound is authentic, because they [the trainees] will have to face real life injuries on the battlefield and treat those wounds appropriately," Sgt. First Class Mary Ann Noland, wound applicator, TF Med Falcon, said.



Staff Sgt. Frank Johnson, head medic, HHC, TF Alamo decides to use a tourniquet to stop the mock bleeding of TF Alamo's Geoffrey Addison, combat medic, Co. C., arm injury during Stage 3 of Combat Medic Advanced Skills Training.

One of the chief ideas behind this training is to instill "Care under fire," Johnson said.

Care under fire is when, "You're receiving direct fire, one of your battle buddies is injured and bleeding to death," Johnson said. "Your first priority is to send rounds down range to suppress fire. Then you find a safe environment to provide medical care."

Many medics first instinct is to rush to the aid of an injured Soldier on the battlefield; thus putting them in harm's way, Johnson said. If the medic is wounded or even killed, other injured Soldiers may not receive the adequate medical attention needed.

"One of the reasons this training was so significant is that it threw the medics into a simulated combat situation, put a lot of pressure on them and forced them to think critically while making fast decisions," Johnson said. "This is what they'll have to do, if and when they have to go to combat."

"It (CMAST training) is a real good experience because it draws on the tactical aspect of medicine in a field environment," student medic Spc. Juan Trevino, Company A, Task Force Alamo, said. "It is extremely important because practice makes perfect when you have to save a life for real."



Staff Sgt. Frank Johnson, head medic, HHC, TF Alamo administers an I-V to a wounded Soldier, Spc. Geoffrey Addison, combat medic, Co. C, TF Alamo, while 1st Lt. Joseph Santiago, CMAST Evaluator, TF Med Falcon assists.

Grudge Match



On the "Pitch"



Clockwise from left to right, Capt. Arthur Smith, Bondsteel United's Gerson Reyes, AAFES's Goal-keeper Thomas Smith, Bondsteel United's 1st. Lt. Luke Talbot, AAFES's defender Jean Myrttil, Bondsteel United's David Torres and AAFES's players Misrit Rexhepi, Skender Jashari, Betim Hasani, chase down a squirrely corner kick that squirms past the AAFES's Goalmouth in the second half of the July 4 afternoon soccer game at the Bergstrom Sports Field Complex.

From left to right, Bondsteel United's Ignacio Ochoa watches AAFES striker Benyam Adenew dribble past Bondsteel United defenders Jarrod Gutierrez and David Torres on July 4 at the Bergstrom Sports Field Complex.



AAFES SLIPS PAST BONDSTEEL UNITED, 3-2, IN JULY 4TH CUP

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Story, Photos, Layout & Design by Sgt. Matthew Chlosta

Under the watchful eye of the local Kosovo mountain “Ljuboten” off in the distance, a hodgepodge soccer team made up of local Kosovo nationals came from behind to slip past Bondsteel United, an experienced squad of American Soldier “footballers,” 3-2, at 3 p.m. on July 4, in the 4th annual July 4th Cup, at the Bergstrom Sports Complex.

The ragtag team of Army and Air Force Exchange Service employees wore various types of T-shirts and tank tops. One player wore a black pair of jeans and sneakers instead of cleats.

The AAFES squad was short a few players, so they were teamed up with a few Soldier “ringers” to fill out their starting line up.

The late afternoon grudge match, played on the “pitch,” had all the intensity of the World Cup semifinal matches shown on TV later that evening.

The scrappy locals had their soccer dreams shattered the week before when they got blown out, 4-1, by the Americans.

“We were clicking last weekend,” Bondsteel United coach Raymond Cenicerros said.

But this time it would be different.

AAFES stormed back from a 2-1 deficit late in the second half with a tying goal on a free kick by AAFES electronics repairman Ilir Marevci.

After Marevci’s goal Bondsteel United mounted wave after wave of offensive attacks in AAFES end of the field.

AAFES goalkeeper Thomas Smith used his peanut butter sticky hands to grab shot after shot.

Meanwhile, out in front, AAFES defender Jean Myrtil was a slide tackling machine. He snuffed out Bondsteel United breakaways time after time.

Myrtil was a relentless human shield as he poked the ball away from the Bondsteel United attackers with his feet, in front of the goal mouth and inside the box, over and over again.

With only a few minutes remaining AAFES striker Christopher Smith received a pass from Stephanie Logue.

Smith was able to break free long enough to chip the ball over the outstretched hands of the Bondsteel United goalie, for the game winning goal.

His score put AAFES on top, 3-2, where they remained until time expired.

As the players basked in the glow of victory minutes later, there were smiles all around afterward as the AAFES team members gave each other congratulatory hugs and high fives. This was a great win for the seemingly over-matched and older AAFES team.

“I feel great,” Marevci said. It was a pleasure to play and very good feeling to win, he added.

Bondsteel United’s coach Raymond Cenicerros wasn’t so sanguine in his post game comments.

“(In the) first half we did OK,” Cenicerros said. “We were able to move the ball. (But in the) second half we kind of beat ourselves. We bunched up and didn’t play our positions.”

“We beat ourselves today,” Cenicerros said. “We just had a really bad game.”



Left, AAFES player Capt. Arthur Smith fights for a loose ball with Bondsteel United’s Sgt. Gerson Reyes during AAFES 3-2 win on July 4 at the Bergstrom Sports Field Complex.



SUMMER SAFETY PROGRAM MAKES A **BIG SPLASH** WITH KOSOVAR KIDS

Photo by Spc. Michael O'Neal



Story, Layout & Design
by Spc. J. TaShun Joycé

Gjilan/Gnjilane children take a break from the water July 15 to pose in their new hats given to them for protection against the sun by the 14th Tactical Psychological Battalion as part of its Summer Safety Program.

The Summer Safety Program began in Kamenice/Kamenica the previous weekend.

Other stops for the Summer Safety Program include Viti/Vitina July 22, Shterpce/Strpce August 5, Ferizaj/Urosevac August 12, and Novoberde/Novo Brdo August 19.

Photo by: Spc. J. TaShun Joycé

The 14th Tactical Psychological Operations Battalion kicked off the second week of its summer safety program at the Hawaii restaurant and pool, in Gjilan/Gnjilane on July 15.

As part of the summer safety program Soldiers handed out safety information to parents and children about the hazards of summertime activities and what precautions should be taken to prevent injuries.

In addition to passing out information the children were given free hats and tee shirts and were entertained by the summer safety mascots, a giant rabbit and frog who danced to the live music.

"We're bringing smiles to children's faces," Sgt. Joe Linden, 14th Tactical PSYOP Batt, Firestone, Colorado. "Every summer we've done broadcast and promoted events at the pools."

Events like the Summer Safety Program give children and parents an opportunity to get to know KFOR on a personal level, Linden said.

"People get a chance to communicate with us and get to know us better," he said.

"The kids seem pretty happy and that's a good thing," Spc. Simon Chan, Tactical PSYOP batt., San Francisco, California, said.



Photo by Spc. Michael O'Neal



Above, 13-year-old Fishnik Behluli, a regular at the Hawaii pool stays fit and keeps cool by swimming laps for three hours a day.

Left, A young boy looks up to his father (not shown) for further guidance as he learns how to swim.

As Time Flies...

Story and Photo by: Spc. Gene DuBielak

Layout & Design by Spc. J. TaShun Joycé

Task Force Talon maintenance crew soars past previous milestones

"I am good at doing two things at once, go ahead and talk to me," was the response from Sgt. 1st Class Michael Ramsey. With four aircraft in phase inspection (usually four to five weeks) Task Force Talon's Production non commissioned officer in charge was pressed for time.

"The airframes have to be inspected on a scheduled basis by regulations," Ramsey said. "Right now we have a bird with a bad FLIR system (forward looking infrared) and one with two bad rotors. We have 72 hours to take action on any faults and four birds in various stages of phase inspection"

Ramsey's rapid fire answers were periodically interrupted by others coming in to ask questions and get progress reports. The visitors ranged from pilots to crew chiefs to supply clerks to the company commander and seemingly everyone short of the chaplain. His only response, "welcome to my world, this is what we do around here."

"There is no error in aviation. You can't pull over on the side of the road to change a flat like a hummvv" said crew chief Sgt. Kerry Hamlin of Company A Task Force Talon. "If we make a mistake a bird falls out of the sky."

The regulations and operation tempo keep all involved with the maintenance and operation of Talon's aircraft in constant state of motion. All aircraft have to be monitored both on the ground and in the air.

A glance into the clamshell hangars which house the maintenance facilities show a beehive of activity. Specialists in sheet metal, avionics, electronics and numerous other areas busy themselves daily and nightly keeping the unit's aircrafts airworthy.

Since arriving at Ft. Hood in August of 2005 the task force has logged over 5600 flight hours. This combined with a cold Kosovo winter has kept the maintenance personnel of Talon quite busy.

"That's our biggest challenge, keeping up with the flight hours program, and keeping up with the phases to keep the birds in the air," Ramsey said.

Another vital link in keeping the birds aloft are the Soldiers at the forward area refuel point. The fuelers of Task Force Talon recently achieved a milestone during their deployment. On July 2, the 2000th aircraft was refueled. To date fuel supply specialists have issued 423,414 gallons of fuel.

With their current operational pace Talon is on schedule to refuel over 4000 aircraft and issue 800,000 gallons of fuel. To put those numbers in perspective, the previous rotation's aviation battalion issued 667,260 gallons to 3334 aircraft in a full year.

Making things more difficult is the logistical chain to



Spc. Randall Rabideau of Lansing, Michigan refuels a UH-60A Blackhawk helicopter at the Forward Area Refuel Point (FARP). The Petroleum Supply Specialists are assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company TF Talon.

ensure the needed parts find their way to the clamshells where they can be used on Talon aircraft. "We are third on the priority list, behind Iraq and Afghanistan," said Ramsey. "If we absolutely need a part we can take it off a bird in phase inspection. We don't call it cannibalization anymore," he said with a hint of a smile, "we now call it controlled exchange."

Assisting the mechanics with their maintenance challenges are the crew chiefs. The crew chiefs serve as the first line of maintenance and try to remedy any faults that can be corrected within 24 hours. The crew chiefs inspect the birds daily. Prior to the pilot's arrival they will have conducted a 90 point inspection including the airframe, hydraulic systems, rotors and props. This is in addition to more detailed inspections based on flight hours logged on the airframe.

The maintenance may seem never ending and redundant but it is essential

"There is no error in aviation. You can't pull over on the side of the road to change a flat like a hummvv," said crew chief Sgt. Kerry Hamlin of Company A task force Talon. "If we make a mistake a bird falls out of the sky."

"GROUND POUNDERS"

11B school puts the "Infantry" in 36th Infantry Division

Story by Maj. Paul Pecena

Layout & Design by Spc. J. TaShun Joycé

When the Texas National Guard's 49th Armor Division was officially "re-flagged" as the 36th Infantry Division in a ceremony at Austin's Camp Mabry July 18th, 2004, it was more than just a symbolic change of unit flags. It was the first sign of transformation in the way many Texas Army National Guard soldiers, including those deployed to Kosovo as part of Multi-National Task Force East, would do business in the future.

"It's a good idea to become a qualified infantry Soldier in today's Texas Army National Guard," Col. Mark Campsey, chief of staff, MNTE(E), said.

"The Thirty-Sixth Infantry Division's transformation will require Soldiers to fill a

"This training is interesting. I usually work in the tactical operation center, so I am getting to do a lot of new things," Sgt. Joshua Newberry, Fayetteville, Arkansas, said.

structure with more infantry battalions and no armor battalions. The force structure will be more versatile, capable of easily deploying to meet the needs of the Governor in Home Land Defense missions or Combatant Commanders around the world on very short notice."

Turning this concept into a reality for National Guard Soldiers in Kosovo took some careful planning. The training plan had to be designed to accommodate Soldiers from every other Army occupation including: cooks, mechanics and tankers, but still provide a tough challenge and a solid foundation of infantry skills.

"I think folks will be surprised at the magnitude of changes that will take place in the Thirty-Sixth in the next few years," Sgt. 1st Class Peter Fenimore, chief, Infantry Branch at the Texas National Guard's Regional Training Academy, Austin, Texas, said. "When the Soldiers complete this two-week course, they will be ready to go back home and be infantry."

Fenimore came to Camp Bondsteel in Kosovo in May 2006, for a three-month tour. His mission: turn more than 100 deployed Soldiers into qualified "Eleven Bravo" infantrymen. Eleven Bravo (11B) is the Army designator for a Soldier trained as an infantryman.

The first day of training starts before dawn with an Army physical fitness test and continues with land navigation training until after dark. The Soldiers are constantly challenged and given an opportunity to excel as an individual and as a team, Fenimore said.

"The students get an individual grade in some kind of task every day, so at the end we can determine the honor graduate. We also have the 'Spirit of the Bayonet' award for the Soldier who shows the best initiative and motivates the other Soldiers," Fenimore said.

The training gets progressively harder throughout the two-week course. Some of the subjects include firing a variety of infantry weapons, like the M-203 grenade launcher, the AT-4 anti-armor rocket and the M-240 light machine gun, at the local range in Urosevac/Ferizaj. The Soldiers use a lot of live ammunition, so Spc. Scott David, a hazardous materials specialist, helps "break down" the ammunition into allotments for each shooter.

Other days are spent practicing squad movements and combat in urban environments. An empty two-story brick house just outside the Camp Bondsteel front gate serves as the scene for building clearing operations. The Soldiers practice a variety of building entry techniques, including unusual techniques like using grappling hooks to get to the top floor.

All this training takes place under the close scrutiny of Fenimore's assistant instructors.

"This training is interesting. I usually work in the tactical operation center, so I am getting to do a lot of new things," Sgt. Joshua Newberry, Fayetteville, Arkansas, said. "I knew it was going to be painful so I got ready by going out on foot patrols and doing a lot of PT (physical training)."

The final exercise is a grueling eight-mile road march around the perimeter road of Camp Bondsteel.

"We kept it at eight miles because they go up Radar Hill three times," Fenimore said. Radar Hill is infamous among Soldiers at Camp Bondsteel for its long, steep slope.

"Going up that with a thirty-five pound pack, load-bearing equipment, rifle, and helmet will smoke you," Fenimore said.

Despite the many challenges, not one Soldier has dropped out of the course, Fenimore said.

Graduation day brings a sense of pride in having done something worthwhile.

"It was an experience, I liked it," Spc. Eric Alejandro said. "It was good training. In fact, I wanted to keep on going."

Editor's note: The assistant instructors for the 11B training are: Sgt. 1st Class Robert Mangel, Staff Sgt. Joe Shipp, Sgt. 1st Class Adam Gaona, Staff Sgt. Derrick Harris, Master Sgt. Charles Covington, 1st Sgt. Craig Davis, Sgt. 1st Class Juan Ysaguirre, Sgt. 1st Class Robert Becknal, Sgt. 1st Class Richard King, Spc. Randall Wossum, and Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Adams.



Sgt. 1st Class Juan Ysaguirre, assistant instructor, Co. B, TF Alamo, takes aim and prepares to fire his M-203 grenade launcher at a range in Urosevac / Ferizaj on July 22 to show the class how to use it properly. The M-203 grenade launcher is only one of a variety of infantry weapons that Soldiers in training use to become 11B qualified.

We are on the downward slope of this deployment and over the halfway point here in Kosovo. However, stress can take its toll over time, and sometimes you need a little help to get to the finish line.

Combat Stress Control is here at Camp Bondsteel and ready to assist you with this step. If you don't come in, we can't help you. Some of the reasons Soldiers don't come in is because they think it goes against everything a Soldier is supposed to be, that you are weak or admitting defeat if you seek treatment. That is not true. In many cases you will be even stronger having received services from CSC. Still there are others who may think that their career will end, simply by showing up at our doorstep. First of all, your career will not be over when you receive services at CSC. Our services are strictly confidential. However, if you are going to hurt yourself or others we will then have to report your intentions to your chain of command.

Our records are not placed with your medical records. Even though we are located at the Camp Bondsteel hospital, we keep our records with us and eventually they are destroyed.

Now that we have cleared that up, let us move on to what can help get you to the finish line of this deployment. There are many issues that we see and address here in CSC, such as relationship issues, sleeping problems, stress management, depression, anxiety, tobacco cessation and anger management. Usually an issue showing up here at Camp Bondsteel has probably shown up at home in the past.

In counseling we use a treatment technique called cognitive behavioral therapy. That means using your thoughts to control your feelings, which then control your behavior or actions. You do this by talking to yourself, usually thinking it. Now, that doesn't sound very special, for the most part. However, when we look at it from another perspective, our thoughts cause our feelings and behaviors, not external things, like people, situations, and events. The benefit of this fact is that we can change the way we think to feel or act better even if the situation does not change.

Your life is what you make it. Is the glass half full or half empty? People tend to live up to what's expected of them and they tend to do better when treated as if they are capable of success. You get what you expect. If you expect disaster, your expectations may well be met in a kind of "self-fulfilling prophecy." There are several experiments or exercises which gives credence to, "positive thinking," like the classic experiment by Rosenthal and Lenore Jacobson. Children were randomly chosen from 18 classrooms, however, their teachers were told that they were "intellectual bloomers," geniuses or the best of the best. Guess what happened? You got it. Those children performed admirably, increasing in every area of the IQ testing. For all of you who are thinking that the teachers must have been significantly better than their counterpart, they too were selected randomly.

Another lesson to be learned is the power of positive thinking. In short, if you expect this deployment or any other aspect of your life to be bad, it will probably be bad. If you look for this deployment to be good or any aspect of your life to be positive, it will probably turn out for the best. There will always be those who complain about everything. A negative attitude is so easy to pick up. Luck tends to happen to those people who not only work hard but think hard, too. Play out what life gives you.

Tobacco Cessation:

Tobacco cessation has been and continues to be an important piece of what we do here at CSC. Stress, along with other factor can cause a person to start smoking and chewing or cause them to start back doing those things. We provide one-on-one counseling as well as nicotine replacement therapy to maximize your chances of success in our tobacco cessation program.

Most smokers know what the ingredients of a cigarette are; however, there may be a few that you may not be aware of such as: Acetone (finger nail polish remover), Ammonia (toilet bowl cleaner), Arsenic (rat poison), and another may be Methanol, which is rocket fuel. All of these chemicals are hazardous to your body and contribute to the many diseases that are caused by smoking and/or dipping and chewing.

While the diseases that can be caused by tobacco are very serious, there is also hope. One of the major benefits of quitting is the health benefits that come along with kicking the habit. Within 1-5 years the risk for heart attack and lung cancer is 50 percent and within 5-10 years the risk for heart attack and lung cancer is reduced to that of a tobacco free person.

Recommendations for Soldiers Going on Leave:

Soldiers can often find more stress after their leave time. They return home to see that things may have changed. Problems that were distant are in their faces and often are ignored in order for the leave time to be a vacation. When the Soldier returns to theater he has these problems to worry about and little he can do about them. The routine of living in a combat zone become annoying as just days ago he did not have to wear his weapon and could get up when he wanted.

Ignoring problems while on leave just makes them worse. It is hard to make decisions in so short a time but your family may not bring up problems unless you ask. Discuss the problems while you are there and try and find some possible solutions. Don't feel you have to pick one but try and continue to talk with your family about the pros and cons and let them make the decision with you. Remember that some solutions are not going to be ideal but that may be the best you can do from overseas.

For an initial meeting stop by Task Force Med Falcon-Combat Stress Control in the CBS hospital anytime during our posted hours. We are located in rooms 060, 061, & 063. No appointment needed, Soldiers are seen on a walk-in basis. Our hours of operation are: Monday – Friday 8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m., Thursday and Saturday: 8:30 a.m. – noon. Please contact us by phone at DSNx7061 or at the CSC offices if you think we can help make a difference. No problem is too small.

YOUR CSC team:

-Sgt. Shawn Kuller, Sgt. Stephen Box, Cpt. Donovan Horton, Maj. Bruce Burns-

Another lesson to be learned is the power of positive thinking. In short, if you expect this deployment or any other aspect of your life to be bad, it will probably be bad. If you look for this deployment to be good or any aspect of your life to be positive, it will probably turn out for the best.

make things happen, Hansen said.

A lot of the mission is making contacts in FYROM and if situations arise, we know who to go to, Roberson said.

We're part of Task Force Falcon and report directly to the chief of staff, Hansen said.

The FYROM LNOs also attend a quarterly meeting at Kosovo Force Headquarters in Film City, Prishtine/Pristina, for the Principal Level Temporary Operating Procedures Agreement.

The PLM TOPA is a meeting of the minds of all the players that deal with Kosovo border issues on both sides of the border, including: the Republic of Albania, the FYROM, Kosovo Police Service, United Nations Mission in Kosovo Border Police, MNTF(E), MNTF(SW).

"This meeting covers issues that are happening on either side of the border and the different agencies involved," Roberson said. "Our job (here) is to represent MNTF(E) with the government, military, civilian entities in Kosovo and the (Shkup/Skopje) NATO headquarters."

"My job on a daily basis is to bring together the Task Force Hellas with the headquarters of Multi-National Task Force (East)," Sgt. Stilianos Kolaxis, LNO, TF Hellas, said.

Recently Stilianos helped coordinate a media visit to the Armenian Army platoon stationed at the TF Hellas Camp Regas Feras.

The LNOs duty is to bring together the different parts responsible for accomplishing the missions and make it happen, Stilianos said.

Different events call for different LNOs: Quick Reaction Force

Red wrote that some of the bigger events he has helped coordinate recently were the reconfiguration of Camp Monteith to a forward operating base and the move of the POL/UKR battalion to CBS.

"The POL/UKR move was a particularly challenging situation at the USA-REUR level and I assisted in getting this project expedited through the proper channels," Red wrote.

Each LNO is a "middleman," but every situation they deal with is varying and different on many levels whether it be in daily scenarios or in emergency situations.

In May, NATO Aircan crashed in a field near Prishtine/Pristina. Immediately afterwards, Rivera helped deal with situation.

"Seconds after we found out about the accident, I called the MNTF(E) TOC and we were able to divert AH-64 assets from another mission and secure the crash site until a ground security force arrived," Rivera said. "We acted quickly and decisively and protected NATO equipment and the lives of two pilots until ground security and medical aid arrived."

In the past seven months Hansen & Roberson helped with coordination and

notification for joint MNTF(E) border patrols and the TF Alamo Cordon & Search near Kacanik/Kacanik in March.

"We've coordinated wheelchair donations, brought the Task Force MedFalcon doctors (down) to tour the FYROM Army hospital," Hansen said.

"On occasion I talk to the (FYROM) LNO," Rivera said. "I do coordinate a lot with our LNO in Army Europe, Lt. Colonel Red."

Everyday is different

"I think the most satisfying part of being the LNO is that I get to paint the story of what Multi-National Task Force (East) does to the KFOR command group," Rivera said.

"It is a very challenging job and very time consuming. I work seven days a week, twenty-four seven," he said.

"It's a good mission," Roberson said. "This is something you're rarely going to get in the Guard. We're facilitators."

"Being LNO in MNTF(E) it is great opportunity to know new interesting people, friends and improve language skills," Radziejowski said. "It was my decision to work as LNO, I thought that it is very interesting job."

There is, "never a dull moment, everyday is different. An LNO has to be extremely flexible, (you) do not know what the phone or e-mail is going to bring your way," Red wrote.

(You) do not know who is going to show up at your desk with an issue," Red wrote.

Safety Office's Monthly Message

This month's safety slogan is, "In case of injury remember 'RICE' -- rest, ice, compress and elevate"

Sports related injuries-With sunny weather, I see a lot of Soldiers playing softball; it is a fun competitive sport. Prior to any game, few teams take the time to stretch; you can see the coaches or captains putting the players thru stretching exercises. Like any other sport, this is important to do it prior, but equally important is to stretch after the game. This will mitigate the risk of injury. Wear the appropriate gear.

Hydration-During the 4th of July formation several Soldiers had to be moved to the medics area because of dehydration. This is an indicator of 2 factors, 1. Soldiers are not hydrating properly; 2. Poor conditioning on the part of some Soldiers.

Every time you have a mission outdoors, ensure you are hydrated prior to being exposed to the heat. Healthy meal/snack consumption and proper exercise will also help you to mitigate these risks.

NCOs ensure that individual Soldier safety is part of your daily PMCS.

The NCO support channel is working, thanks for keeping the Soldiers safe and remember;

Stress safety in everything we do!

***Lt. Col. Mario M. Alayon,
chief safety officer,
Task Force Falcon***

dropping on their heads, Darrisaw III, said.

On a daily basis our job entails, "Installation force protection, law enforcement support, customs support, high risk personnel security missions (and) contingency operations support," Derr said.

Every Thursday the dog handlers do a detection sweep through the weekly market in Shterpce/Strpce, where they check for explosives. The market experienced a small bomb explosion last fall that injured four people.

"They see us and they feel safer to go about (their) daily business in the market."

Fortunately, the dog handlers haven't found any explosives in Kosovo during our time here so far, Potter said.

"It's good that we didn't find anything," Derr said, "as long as there is nothing to find. That is a good thing."

According to Potter, the dogs did give a response to explosive materials or residue during a cordon and search earlier this year but nothing was found until weeks later.

Deployments

"One of the best active duty deployments you can get is Kosovo," Potter said.

The dog handlers love their job and are a well traveled bunch, especially during the current Global War on Terror. Potter has deployed to Iraq, Afghanistan and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba during his time as a dog handler, while Darrisaw III has been to Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Hungary.

The hardest part for the dog handlers during their frequent deployments is, "deploying by yourself and relying on yourself," Potter said. "We rely on other units once we hit the ground. Units may not know how to use us. Then we have to explain what we do."

Explosives, Narcotics & People

All military working dogs and their handlers are initially trained by the 341st Training Squadron at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas.

"At Lackland they are taught all the commands in English," Potter said. "So when a handler picks up a dog the commands are exactly the same."

The dogs are taught to look for people, drugs and explosives based on the reward system. If the dog finds something or someone, they're given a burlap "Bitewurst" or a "Kong" ball as

their reward, he said.

The only military dog handler on Bondsteel that searches for narcotics is Sgt. Erica Misiano, military working dog handler, TF Falcon.

"One of my main missions is to conduct Health and Welfare (Inspections)," Misiano said.

Her dog, Gaston, will systematically search every barracks room and then Gaston will passively respond by sitting if an odor of drugs is detected. Gaston also searches the luggage of Soldiers who go on FMPP, she added.

"If you can smoke it, inject it or sniff it, the dog will find it," Potter said.

Daily Training

"We try to do training everyday," Darrisaw III said.

"We'll use different buildings so the dogs don't get used to it," Potter, said. "We like to use some really big areas. You can build endurance in the dog (and) build endurance in yourself."

In addition to Rex2A325, the dog handlers at CBS have three German Shepards.

"These breeds are the most well rounded," Derr said. "They have the best attitude and abilities for our mission."

Joint Training: "We should be more like the dogs"

On July 20, after the military dog handlers' weekly Shterpce/Strpce market explosives detection sweep, the rest of the day went to the dogs.

Before an afternoon mission to sweep the aerial port of debarktion, the U.S. Army dog handlers attended a multi-national training session outside the village of Shtime/Stimlje. The "Miami Vice" style warehouse and grounds used for the training was in a very isolated spot, at least 3 kilometers from any civilization. The group that attended the joint training included dog handlers from the Kosovo Police Service, the German Army, United Nations Mission in Kosovo Police and Denmark.

The day included demonstration of different training techniques, detection tests and a cookout. The camaraderie was evident, as all of the dog handlers enjoyed sharing their different cultures and dog training methods.

The "purpose is so that dog handlers from many countries can come together and do the training together," Bjorn Erik Friegaard, chief instructor, UNMIK-P,

Oslo, Norway, said.

Before today, "we have not 'worked' with, but (we've) trained with other dog teams from the Finnish and Swedish Armies," Derr said.

The joint training with KPS and the other Army dog handlers has taken place twice since May, Christel Shelton, dog handler instructor, UNMIK-P, said. The KPS dog handler unit, "has been in existence for three years now. It is the first time they were able to compare themselves to



Staff Sgt. Michael Derr, kennel master, TF Falcon, Waukomis, Okla., conducts his weekly explosives detection sweep of the Shterpce/Strpce market with his dog Sorbon July, 20.

other dog handlers."

The KPS has drug dogs and are starting up an explosive dog unit also, Friegaard said.

"Everyone sees that dogs are dogs," Friegaard said. "The dogs don't care about language or country. The dogs are the same. The dogs are honest. We should be more like the dogs."

Cool job

You have to be an M.P. first before you can apply to become a military working dog handler, Potter said.

"It's competitive. It's something people want to do," Potter said. "It's an awesome job."



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